



No. 72 Rs. 5/-

DRAUPADI



THE QUEEN OF THE PANDAVAS

AP
Pratap
Mulick

Draupadi sprang full grown from the fire but no other heroine in Hindu mythology was as earthy as she.

Her birth, sought by King Drupada presaged a purpose. Her steely will, which often gleams through her hapless married life, was shaped by the power and plenty that she knew as the beloved daughter of the wealthy king of Panchala. But for this, her tale would have been as passive as that of any other woman of that era, which was less than kind to women. Even as she lived as a woman typical of her times, her fiery personality lent a glow to every thing that she did.

Though won by Arjuna she had to be the wife to all the five Pandavas. Her success in this task was notable enough to bring Satyabhama seeking counsel on married happiness.

When dragged into the assembly of gaming men, at Hastinapura her query in jurisprudence left the grave elders there speechless.

A dutiful wife, she followed her husbands in exile and kept house for them in the forest. An intelligent woman, she plied Yudhishtira with questions on morality.

When Subhadra came in, as Arjuna's wife, Draupadi was jealous. But she controlled it under her regal bearing.

She knew that Keechaka was dead. But her live wrath would not be satisfied till she watched the corpse on its way to be burnt.

Draupadi was the total woman ; complex and yet feminine.

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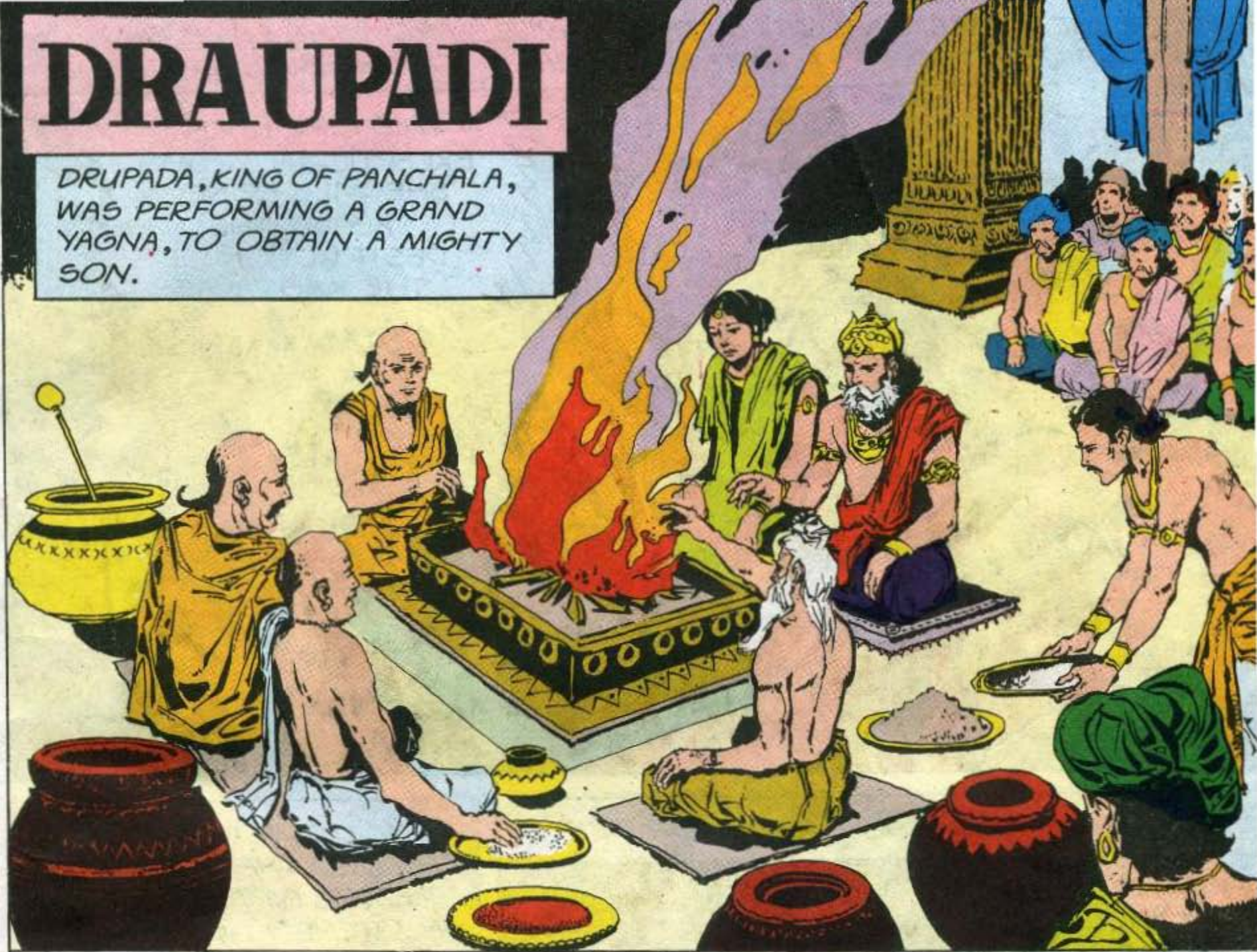
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DRAUPADI

DRUPADA, KING OF PANCHALA, WAS PERFORMING A GRAND YAGNA, TO OBTAIN A MIGHTY SON.



AS THE FLAMES OF THE SACRIFICIAL FIRE LEAPT HIGH -

MAY AN EXCELLENT SON EMERGE FROM THIS FIRE!



AND FORTHWITH FROM THE FIRE SPRANG A YOUTH, HANDSOME, STRONG AND ARMOUR-CLAD.

LET THE BOY BE CALLED DHRISHTADYUMNA.



THEN TO THE AMAZEMENT OF ALL, THERE AROSE FROM THE SAME FIRE A DARK MAIDEN, TOO, WAFTING THE FRAGRANCE OF THE BLUE LOTUS IN BLOOM.



THIS GIRL IS AN EXCEPTIONAL WOMAN. SHE WILL BRING ABOUT THE DESTRUCTION OF THE KAURAVAS.

THE BRAHMANS CHOSE A NAME FOR HER.

DARK AND BEAUTIFUL AS SHE IS, LET HER BE NAMED KRISHNAA.



AS THE DAUGHTER OF DRUPADA SHE SHALL BE CALLED DRAUPADI.

FROM THE MOMENT HE RECEIVED THE UNEXPECTED CELESTIAL GIFT OF THIS UNMATCHED GIRL AS HIS DAUGHTER, ONE THOUGHT OBSESSED DRUPADA—HER MARRIAGE.

ARJUNA, THE VALIANT PANDAVA WOULD HAVE BEEN AN IDEAL HUSBAND FOR MY DAUGHTER. IF ONLY HE, HIS MOTHER, AND BROTHERS HAD SURVIVED THAT FATEFUL FIRE AT VARANAVATA.



HE PONDERED FOR A WHILE. THEN—

I SHALL HAVE A
HEAVY BOW MADE
WHICH ONLY AN
ARJUNA OR HIS
PEER CAN WIELD;
THEN A
TARGET TO
CHALLENGE
AN ACE
ARCHER
LIKE HIM.



THE PANDAVAS, YUDHISHTHIRA,
BHEEMA, ARJUNA, NAKULA AND
SAHADEVA, HOWEVER WERE NOT
DEAD. THE PLAN OF THEIR COUSINS,
THE ENVIOUS KAURAVAS,
TO KILL THEM HAD
FAILED.



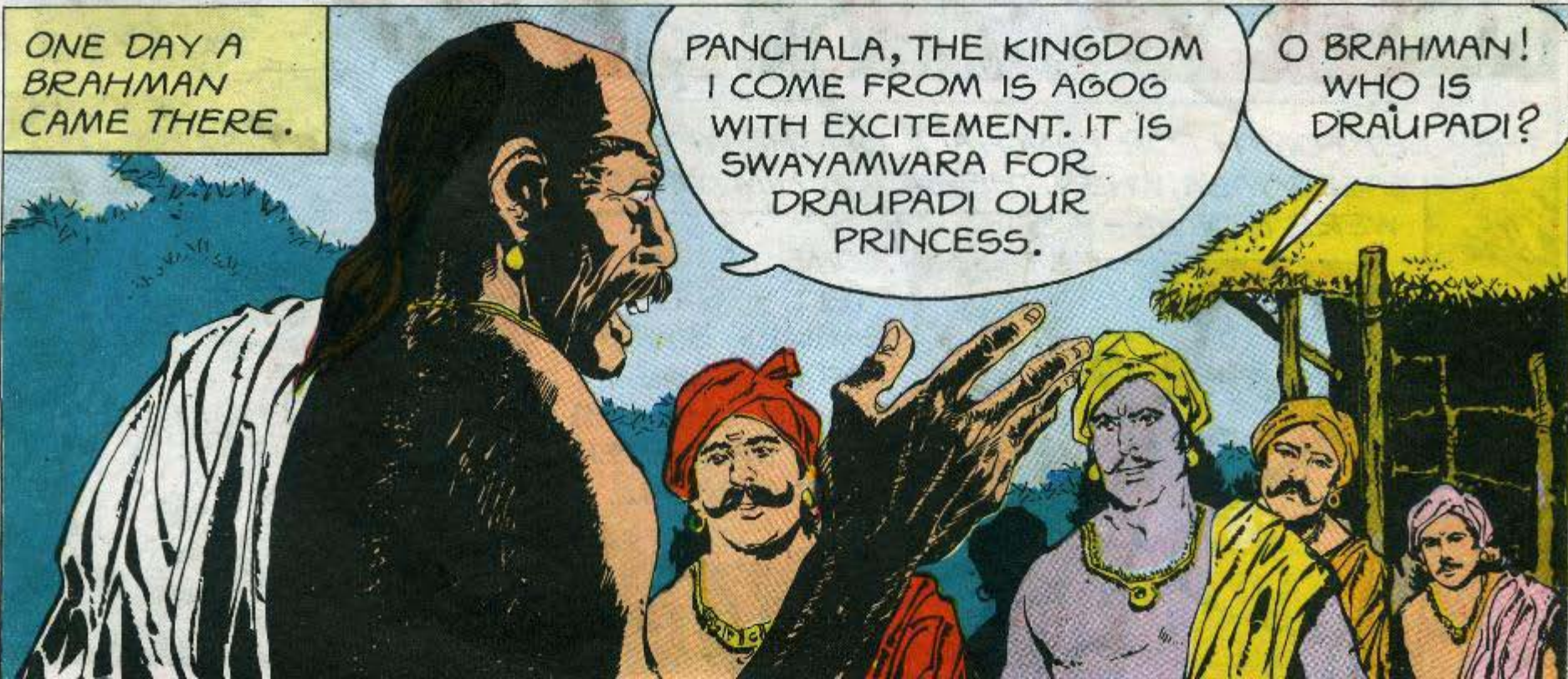
AT THAT MOMENT
DISGUISED AS
BRAHMANNS THEY
WITH THEIR MOTHER
KUNTI, WERE AT
EKACHAKRAPURA.



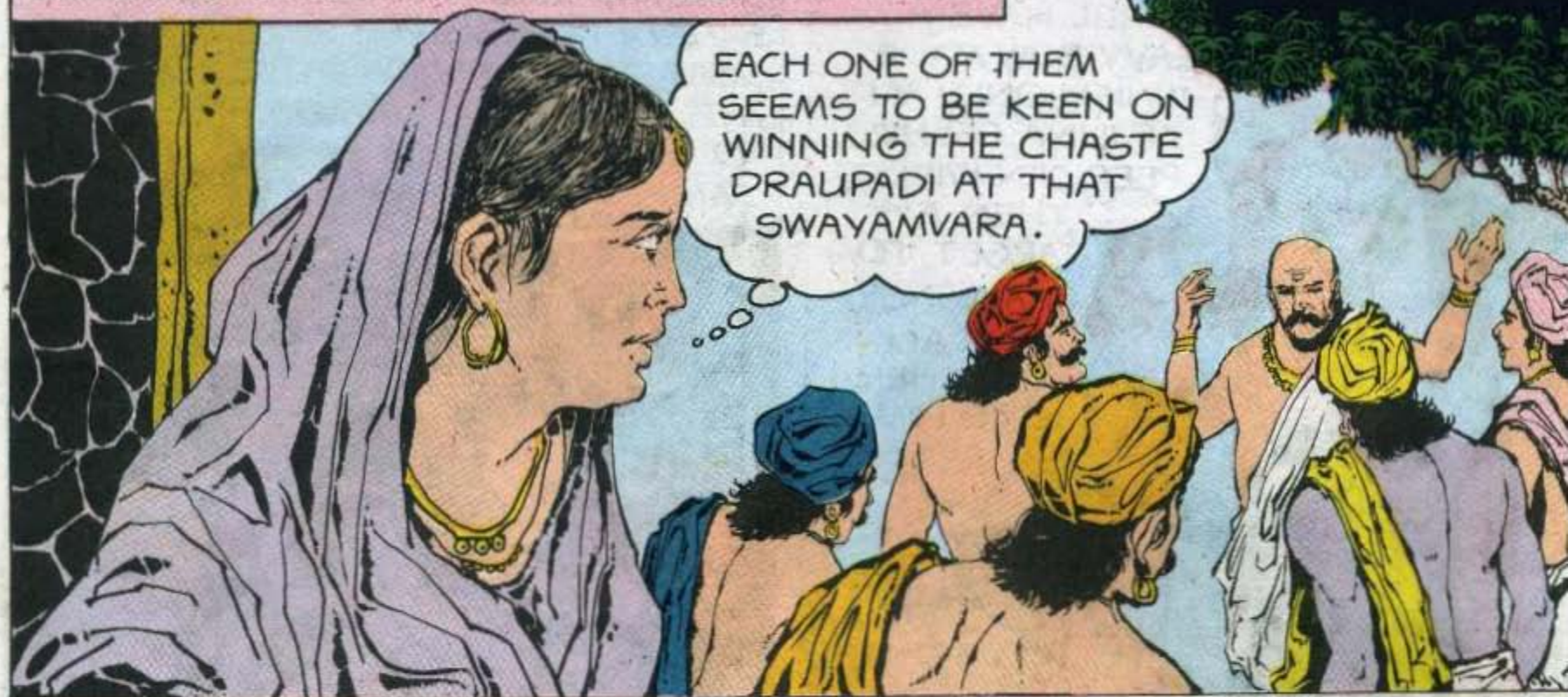
ONE DAY A
BRAHMAN
CAME THERE.

PANCHALA, THE KINGDOM
I COME FROM IS AGOG
WITH EXCITEMENT. IT IS
SWAYAMVARA FOR
DRAUPADI OUR
PRINCESS.

O BRAHMAN!
WHO IS
DRAUPADI?



AS THE PRINCES LISTENED TO HIS STORY, KUNTI WATCHING THEIR FACES GUESSED THE STATE OF HER SONS' MINDS.



EACH ONE OF THEM SEEMS TO BE KEEN ON WINNING THE CHASTE DRAUPADI AT THAT SWAYAMVARA.

LATER SHE CALLED THEM TO HER.

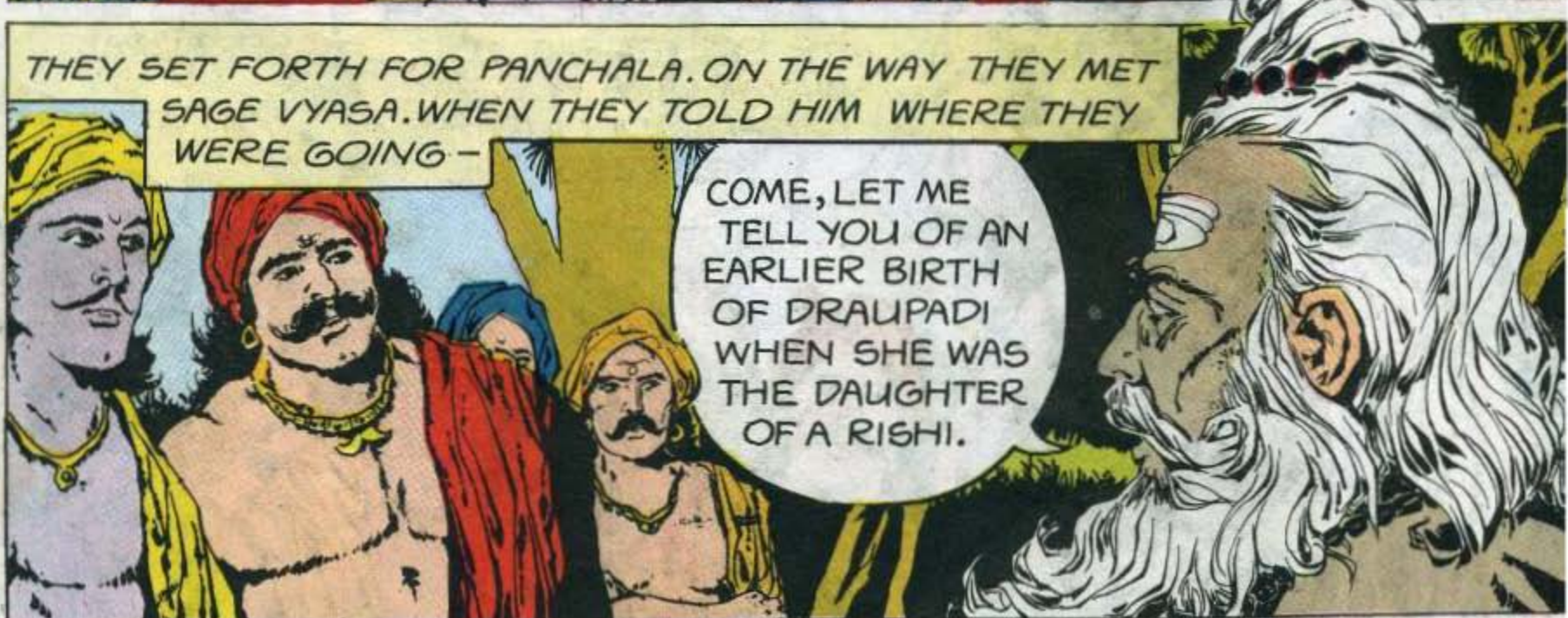
LET US PROCEED TO THE KINGDOM OF PANCHALA. DRUPADA'S CHARITY TO BRAHMAN KNOWS NO BOUNDS.

WHAT DO MY BROTHERS SAY?

LET US GO!



THEY SET FORTH FOR PANCHALA. ON THE WAY THEY MET SAGE VYASA. WHEN THEY TOLD HIM WHERE THEY WERE GOING -



COME, LET ME TELL YOU OF AN EARLIER BIRTH OF DRAUPADI WHEN SHE WAS THE DAUGHTER OF A RISHI.

"THOUGH BEAUTIFUL,
CHASTE AND ACCOM-
PLISHED SHE WAS FATED
TO REMAIN UNMARRIED."

WITH SEVERE
PENANCES TO
LORD SHIVA
SHALL
I TRIUMPH
OVER MY
FATE.



"YEARS OF PENANCE
BROUGHT THEIR REWARD.
SHIVA APPEARED BEFORE
HER."

WHAT FAVOUR
DO YOU
SEEK FROM
ME?



"IN UNCONTROLLED
EAGERNESS THE
GIRL REPEATED
HER REQUEST
FIVE TIMES."

AN ACCOMPLISHED
HUSBAND...AN
ACCOMPLISHED
HUSBAND...AN...



"SHIVA
SMILED"



"THE GIRL WAS
CONFOUNDED."

LORD! I...I...IT WAS
ONLY ONE HUSBAND
THAT I WANTED.



SO BE IT.
YOU SHALL
HAVE FIVE
HUSBANDS FROM
AMONG THE
BHARATA PRINCES.

"SHIVA'S WORDS ONCE
UTTERED COULD NOT BE
REVOKED. BUT--"



THE EVENT CAN
BE POSTPONED.
YOU WILL HAVE THE
FIVE HUSBANDS IN
ANOTHER LIFE.

YOU, THE FIVE
PANDAVAS, ARE THE
FIVE HUSBANDS
DRAUPADI IS DESTINED
TO HAVE. DESTINY
AWAITS YOU IN
PANCHALA. MAKE
HER YOURS.

AND VYASA WENT HIS WAY.

FULL OF HOPE,
THE PRINCES AND
THEIR MOTHER
PROCEEDED TO
PANCHALA.

THE CAPITAL CITY OF PANCHALA WAS HUMMING WITH EXCITEMENT.

THEY SAY THAT
DURIYODHANA AND
THE KAURAVAS
WITH SHAKUNI, THEIR
UNCLE, AND KARNA
THEIR FRIEND,
ARE HERE.

KUNTI AND HER
SONS CHOSE A
POTTER'S
HOUSE TO LIVE
IN. AFTER
RESTING FOR
SOME TIME—

LET US GO TO THE
SWAYAMVARA AND
TAKE OUR PLACE
AMONG THE
BRAHMAN.

THE GREAT DAY DAWNED.
WHEN ALL WERE ASSEMBLED,
DHRISHTADYUMNA CAME
FORWARD LEADING
DRAUPADI.

HEAR O KINGS! THIS
IS THE BOW..THE
NOBLEMAN WHO
HITS THE MARK
SHALL TODAY WED
MY SISTER.



KARNA WAS AMONG THE
FIRST TO TRY. THE PANDAVAS
WERE DISMAYED.

IT'S
KARNA! WE
MAY CONSIDER
THE MARK AS
ALREADY
HIT.



BUT AS KARNA STRUNG THE
BOW AND TOOK AIM -

I WILL NEVER MARRY
ONE OF THE
*SUTA CASTE!!

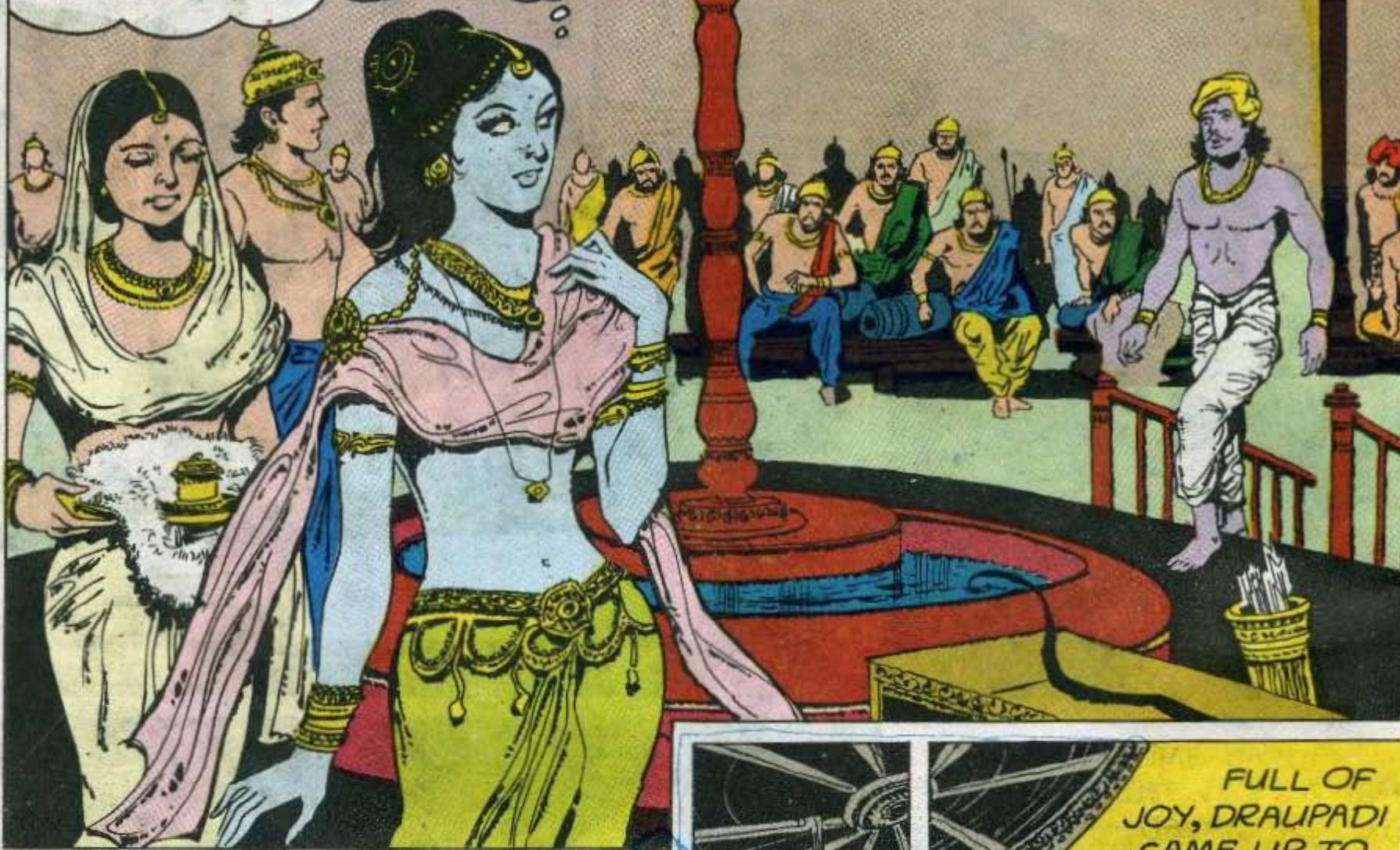
YOU
SHOULD
NOT HAVE
HUMILIA-
TED ME
SO,
DRAUPADI.



*SUTA = AN INFERIOR KSHATRIYA.

ONE BY ONE THE OTHERS TRIED AND FAILED. WHEN ALL OF THEM HAD GIVEN UP, ARJUNA STEPPED FORWARD.

A HUMBLE BRAHMAN. YET HOW NOBLE AND CONFIDENT IS HIS BEARING.



ARJUNA'S ARROW FOUND ITS MARK.



FULL OF JOY, DRAUPADI CAME UP TO ARJUNA WITH A GARLAND OF FLOWERS.



MEANWHILE KUNTI WAS WORRIED.

MY SONS ARE LATE. HAVE THEIR COUSINS RECOGNIZED THEM AND KILLED THEM? WAS VYASA MISTAKEN IN...

SUDDENLY-

LOOK MOTHER! SEE WHAT WE HAVE BROUGHT TODAY!

WHATEVER IT IS, SHARE IT EQUALLY AND ENJOY IT.

A MOMENT LATER SHE CAME OUT AND SAW DRAUPADI.

ALAS! YUDHISHTHIRA, WHAT HAVE I SAID!

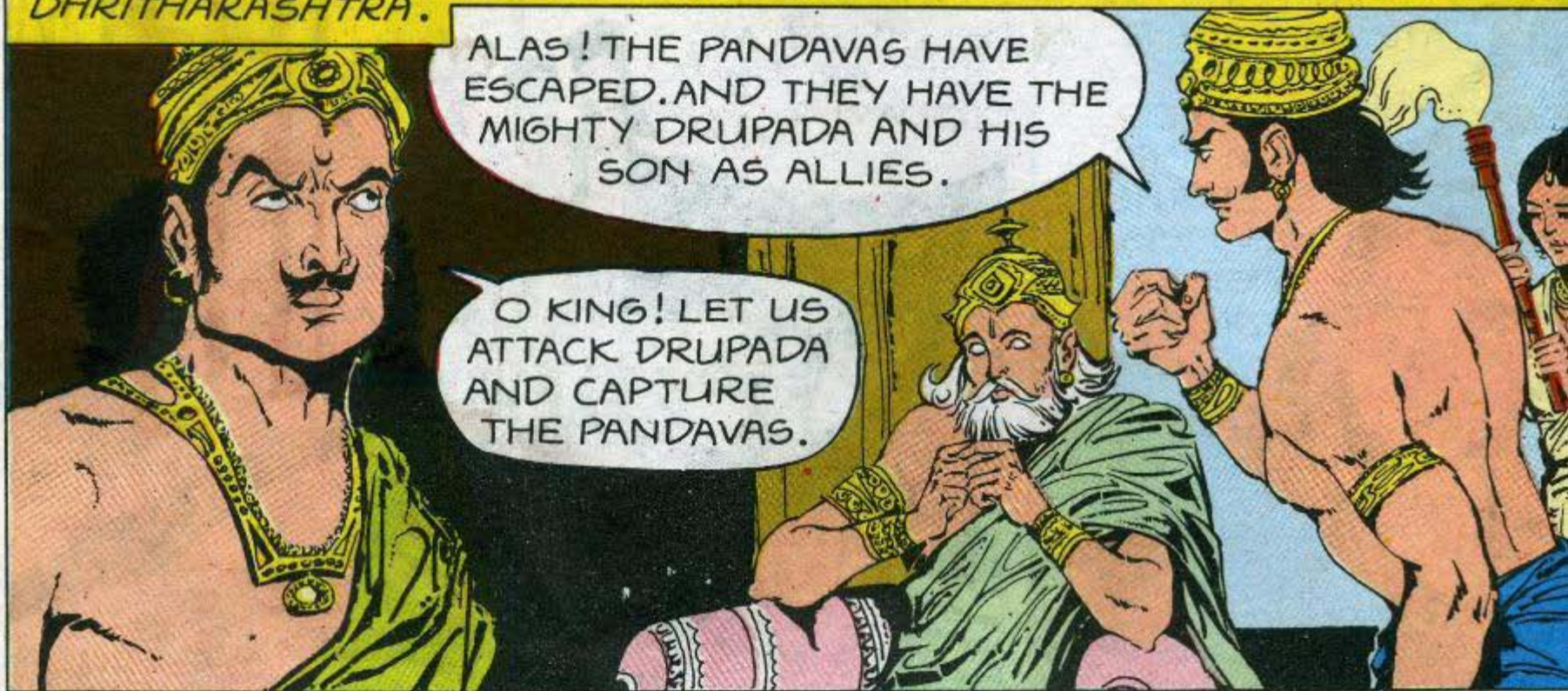
ARJUNA WON HER. IT IS PROPER THAT HE MARRY HER.

AND COMMIT THE SIN OF IGNORING MY MOTHER'S ORDERS?

NO YUDHISHTHIRA, WE SHALL EACH ONE OF US MARRY HER. YOU THE ELDEST FIRST, THEN BHEEMA, THEN MYSELF AND THEN THE TWINS.

ALL RIGHT! THEN DRAUPADI SHALL BE A WIFE TO ALL OF US.

BY THEN DURYODHANA HAD LEARNT THAT IT WAS THE PANDAVAS WHO HAD WON DRAUPADI. BACK AT HASTINAPURA HE WENT TO HIS FATHER, THE BLIND DHRITHARASHTRA.



BUT THE KURU ELDERS ADVISED DHRITHARASHTRA AGAINST THIS.



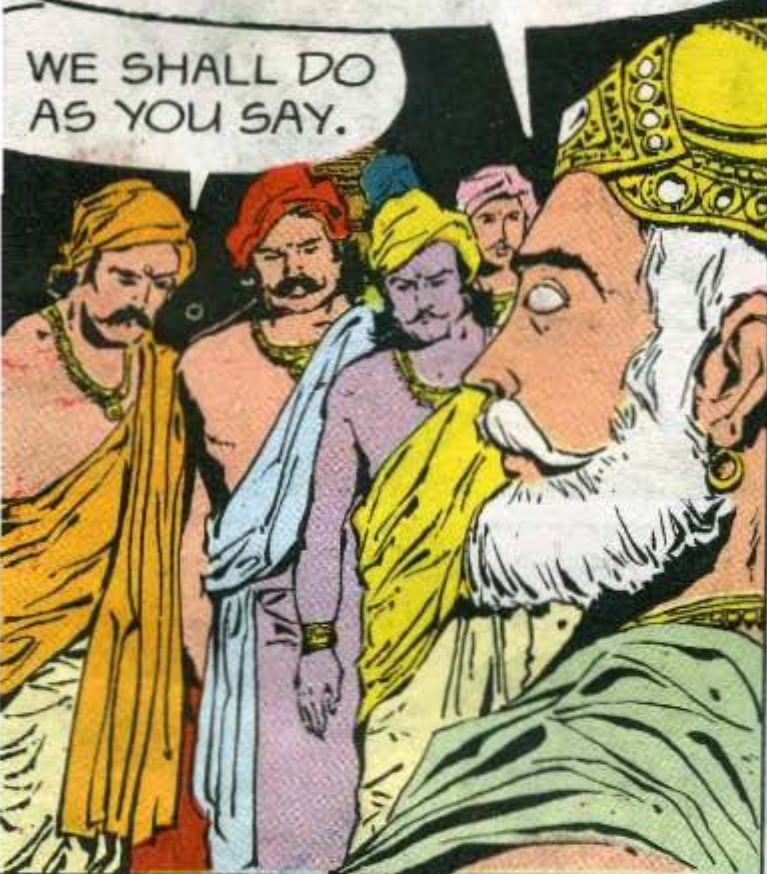
WHEN THE PANDAVAS RETURNED TO HASTINAPURA—



WHEN THEY CAME TO PAY
THEIR RESPECTS TO
DHRITHARASHTRA—

I GRANT YOU HALF THE
KINGDOM. GO TO
KHANDAVAPRASTHA AND
RULE FROM THERE. MAY
ALL PROSPERITY BE YOURS.

WE SHALL DO
AS YOU SAY.



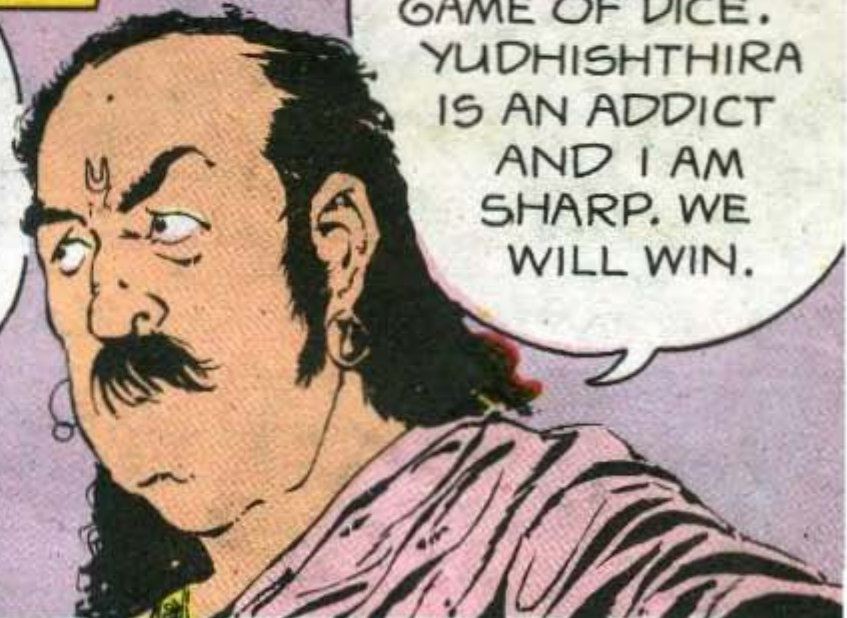
HAVING OBTAINED THEIR RIGHTFUL SHARE
OF THE KINGDOM THE EVER-TRUTHFUL
YUDHISHTHIRA AND HIS BROTHERS
RULED VIRTUOUSLY OVER IT.



DURYODHANA, MORE ENVIOUS THAN EVER,
PLOTTED WITH
HIS UNCLE
SHAKUNI.



O UNCLE,
IS THERE
NO WAY
TO RUIN
MY
COUSINS?



THERE IS. BY A
GAME OF DICE.
YUDHISHTHIRA
IS AN ADDICT
AND I AM
SHARP. WE
WILL WIN.

WHEN THE
INVITATION
TO PLAY
REACHED
YUDHISHTHIRA—



I AM UNWILLING
TO GAMBLE WITH
SHAKUNI WHO,
IT IS KNOWN,
CHEATS AT DICE.
BUT I MUST
ACCEPT THE
ROYAL
CHALLENGE.

AT THE GAME YUDHISHTHIRA STAKED ALL HIS WEALTH, THEN HIS BROTHERS, AND THEN HIMSELF, AND LOST ALL.



YUDHISHTHIRA HAD TO AGREE. SHAKUNI CAST THE DICE.



A JUBILANT DURYODHANA TURNED TO PRATIKAMI, A SUTA.



PRATIKAMI VENTURED GINGERLY INTO DRAUPADI'S PRESENCE.

I HAVE COME TO TAKE YOU TO DURYODHANA. YOU HAVE BEEN STAKED AND LOST BY YUDHISHTHIRA.

A KING STAKING HIS WIFE, AWAY! ALAS HE WAS SURELY INTOXICATED WITH DICE.

DID HE HAVE NOTHING ELSE TO STAKE?



HE DIDN'T. HE STAKED AND LOST ALL, EVEN HIMSELF.

GO BACK AND FIND OUT WHOM HE LOST FIRST - HIMSELF OR ME? THEN COME TO TAKE ME.

WHEN PRATIKAMI CARRIED DRAUPADI'S QUERY TO DURYODHANA -



SHE SHALL GET HER ANSWERS HERE. GO, DUHSHASANA. BRING HER TO US.

DUHSHASANA BROKE INTO DRAUPADI'S CHAMBER.

CAST ASIDE YOUR MODESTY.
COME, YOU HAVE BEEN
WON BY US. ACCEPT
THE KURUS AS YOUR
LORDS.



DRAUPADI TRIED
TO RUN AWAY
BUT ROARING
WITH ANGER
DUHSHASANA
RAN AFTER HER.

COME HERE,
YOU SLAVE...



YUDHISHTHIRA IS BOUND BY
THE RULES OF GAMBLING.
HE IS BLAMELESS. BUT O WRETCH
MY OTHER HUSBANDS WILL NOT
FORGIVE YOU.



AS DUHSHASANA DRAGGED DRAUPADI IN, NOT A WORD OF PROTEST ROSE FROM THE ASSEMBLY.

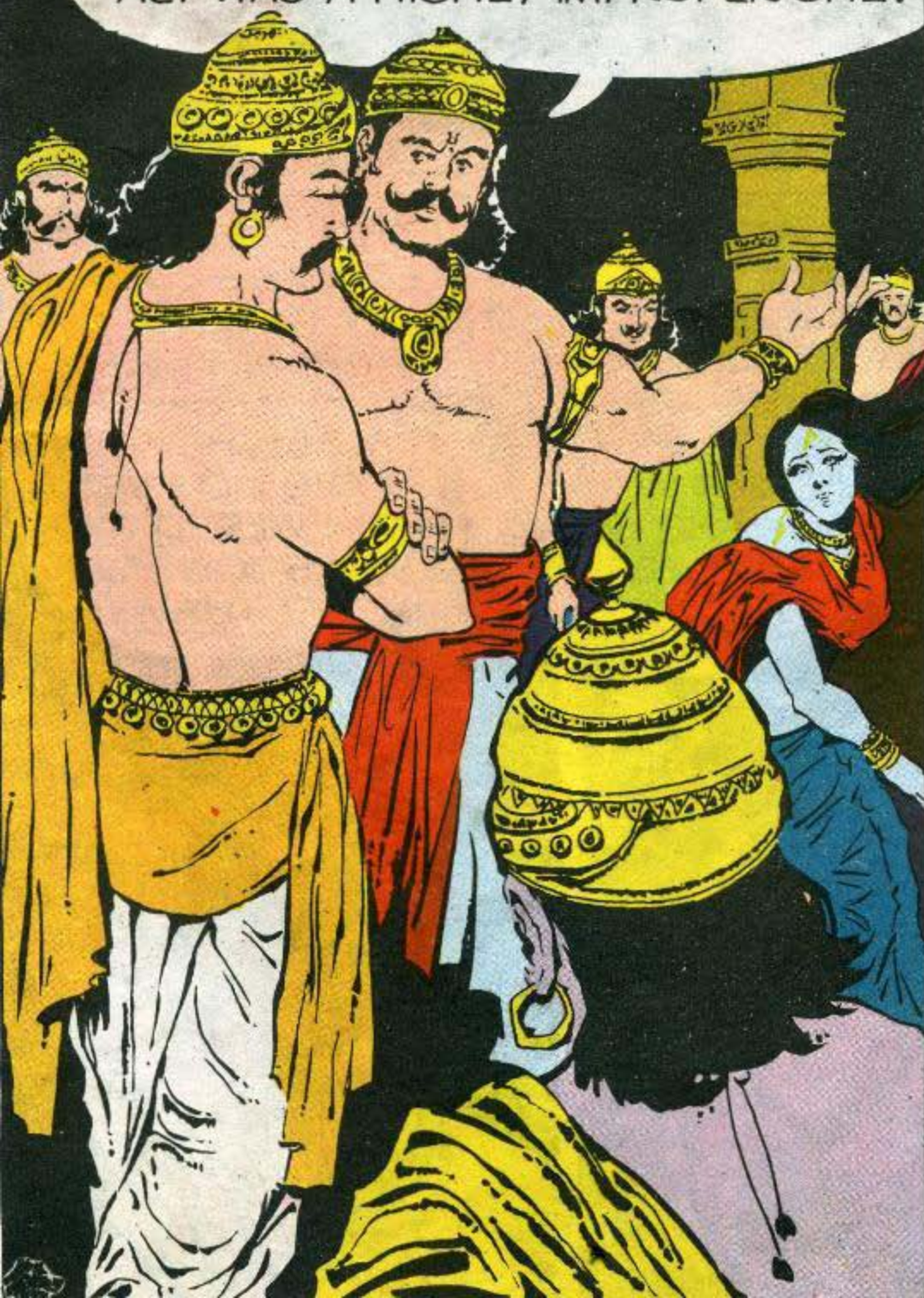


CHOOSE ANOTHER HUSBAND NOW WHO WILL NOT MAKE YOU A SLAVE BY GAMBLING.

THE KURU ELDERS HAVE LOST THEIR REASON. WHY ELSE DO THEY LOOK SILENTLY ON THIS GREAT CRIME?

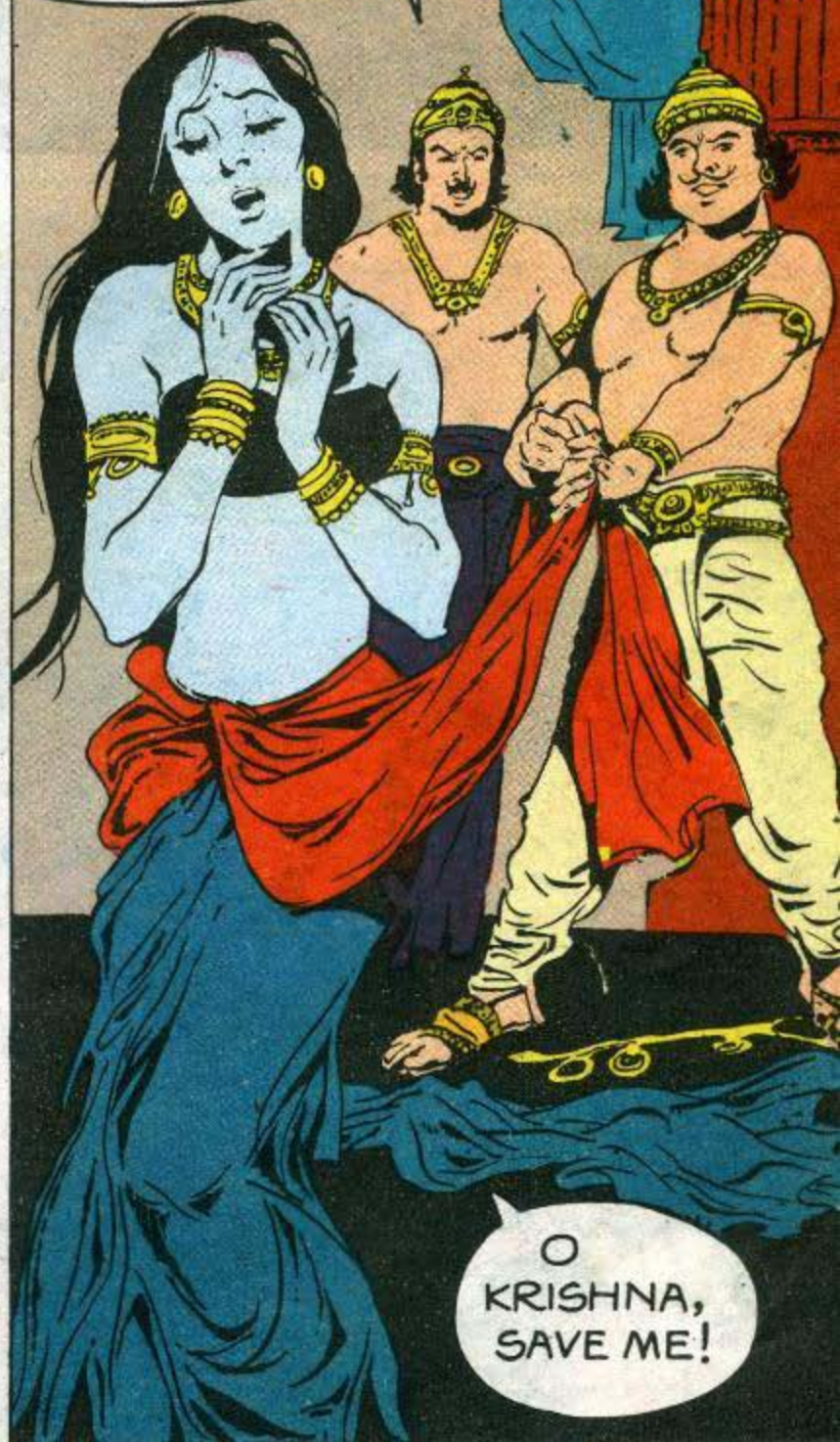
WHILE CRYING THUS IN DISTRESS SHE CAST A GLANCE AT HER HELPLESS HUSBANDS.

YUDHISHTHIRA, LOOK AT HER GLANCES FULL OF MODESTY AND ANGER AND KNOW THAT YOUR ACT WAS A HIGHLY IMPROPER ONE.



AT THAT MOMENT—

THE VERY CLOTHES SHE IS WEARING BELONG TO US! SHE IS OUR SLAVE.

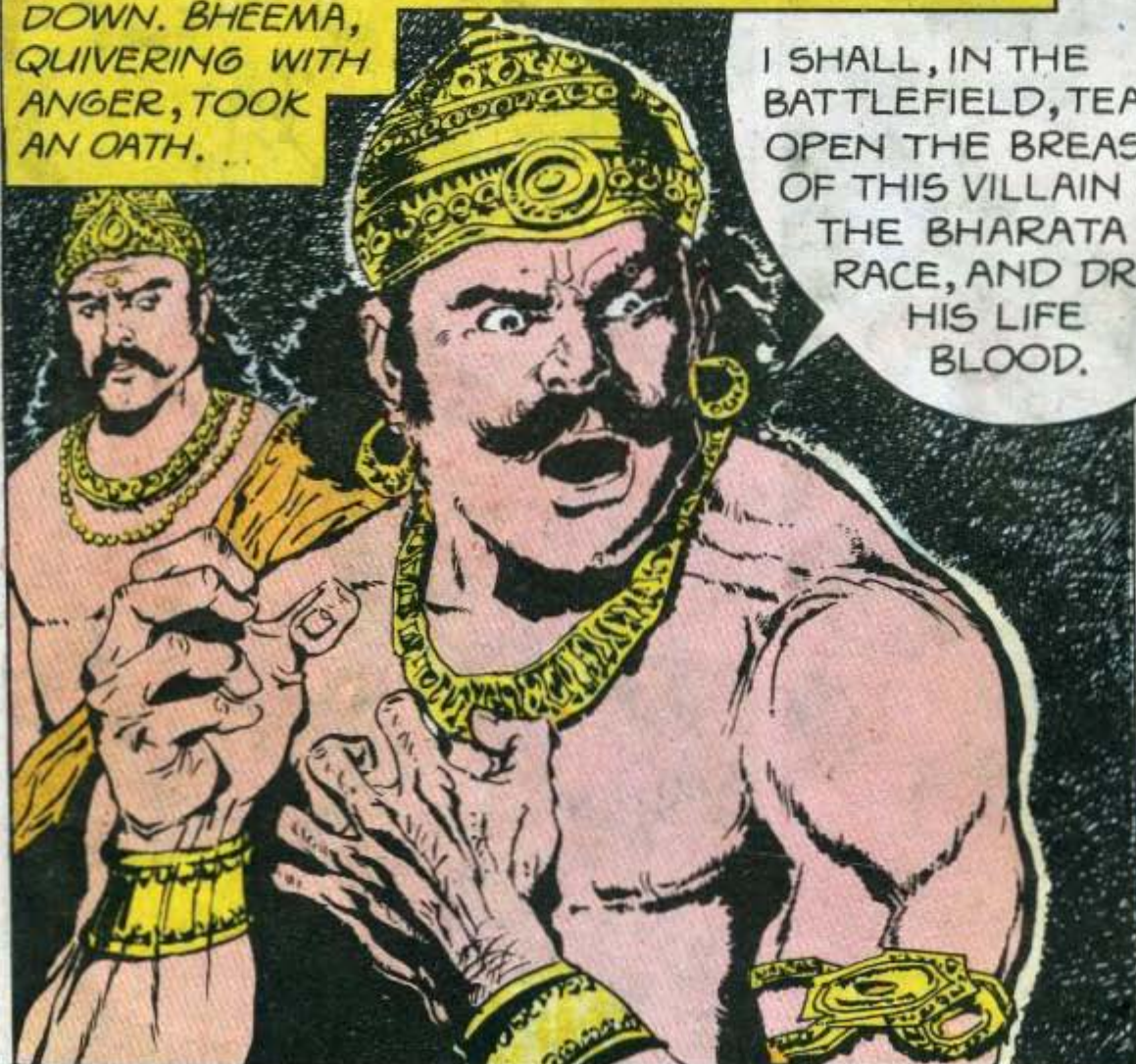


O KRISHNA, SAVE ME!

THEN LO! AS ONE GARMENT WAS REMOVED, ANOTHER MIRACULOUSLY COVERED HER.



FRUSTRATED AND ASHAMED DUHSHASANA SAT DOWN. BHEEMA, QUIVERING WITH ANGER, TOOK AN OATH.



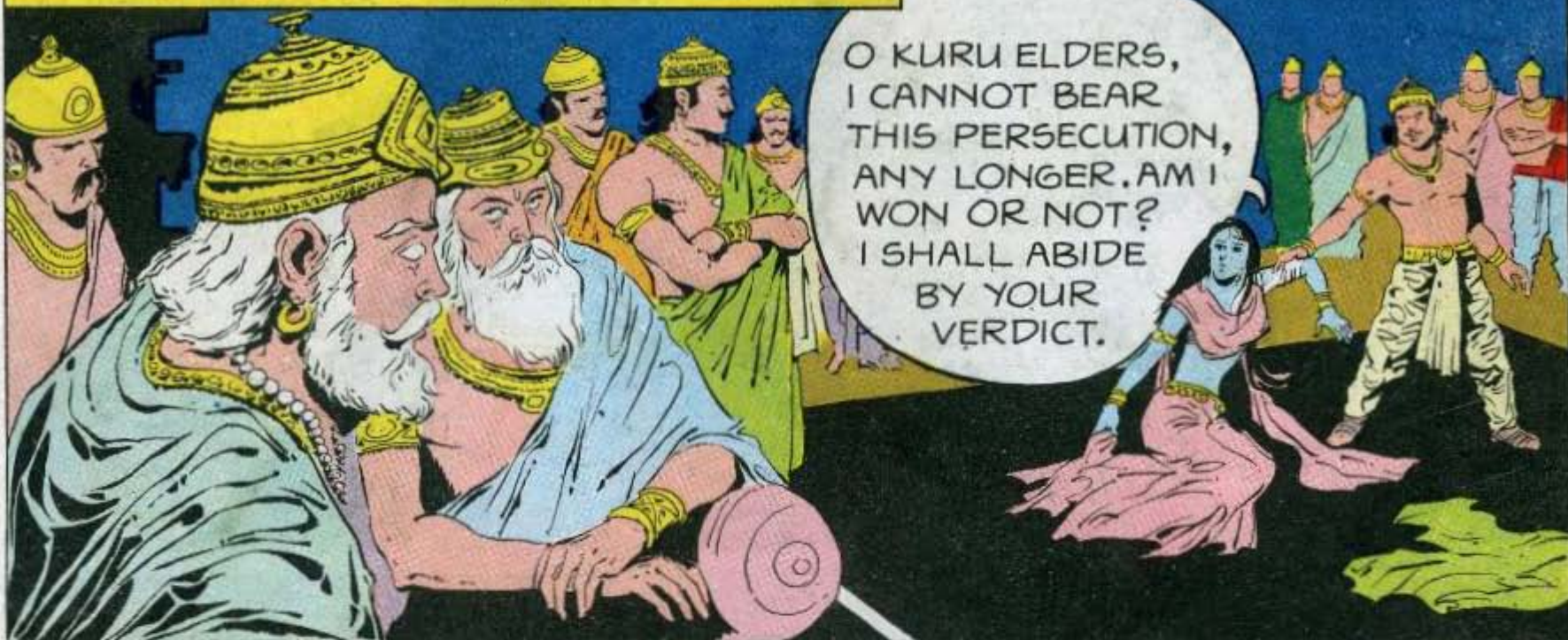
I SHALL, IN THE BATTLEFIELD, TEAR OPEN THE BREAST OF THIS VILLAIN OF THE BHARATA RACE, AND DRINK HIS LIFE BLOOD.

THEN ALL THE ASSEMBLED KINGS CENSURED THE SONS OF DHRITHARASHTRA.

ALAS! THE KURUS HAVE NOT YET ANSWERED THE QUESTION PUT TO THEM.



DUHSHASANA TRIED TO DRAG DRAUPADI AWAY BUT SHE RESISTED.



O KURU ELDERS,
I CANNOT BEAR
THIS PERSECUTION,
ANY LONGER. AM I
WON OR NOT?
I SHALL ABIDE
BY YOUR
VERDICT.

AS SHE WAITED FOR THE VERDICT,
DURYODHANA BECAME BOLDER.



COME DRAUPADI, YOU
ARE WON BY ME. COME
SIT
ON MY
LAP.

MARK MY WORDS,
DURYODHANA,
I SHALL BREAK
THAT THIGH IN
BATTLE...

AT THAT MOMENT JACKALS HOWLED,
ASSES BRAYED AND BIRDS OF PREY
SHRIEKED. DHRITHARASHTRA WAS
ALARMED BY THESE EVIL PORTENTS.

O CHASTE DRAUPADI,
ASK FROM ME ANY
BOON YOU DESIRE.



LET YUDHISHTHIRA BE FREED
FROM SLAVERY. LET NOT
POSTERITY SPEAK OF OUR SON
AS BORN OF A SLAVE.



O VIRTUOUS GIRL,
ASK FOR A
SECOND BOON.

LET
BHEEMA, ARJUNA,
AND THE TWINS
BE FREED FROM
SLAVERY, TOO.

O DAUGHTER,
ASK FOR A
THIRD BOON.

I DO NOT COVET
BOONS. MY
HUSBANDS WILL
ACHIEVE THE
REST.

LATER WHEN YUDHISHTHIRA APPROACHED DHRITHARASHTRA TO TAKE
LEAVE OF HIM—

TAKE YOUR
WEALTH AND
REIGN AT MY
COMMAND. LET
THERE BE BROTHERLY
LOVE BETWEEN YOU
AND YOUR COUSINS.

WHEN DURYODHANA LEARNT OF THIS HE WENT TO DHRITHARASHTRA.

O FATHER, THE PANDAVAS WILL NEVER
FORGIVE THE INSULT TO DRAUPADI. WITH
REGAL POWERS THEY WILL ANNIHILATE
US. PERMIT US TO EXILE THEM BY
ANOTHER GAME OF DICE.

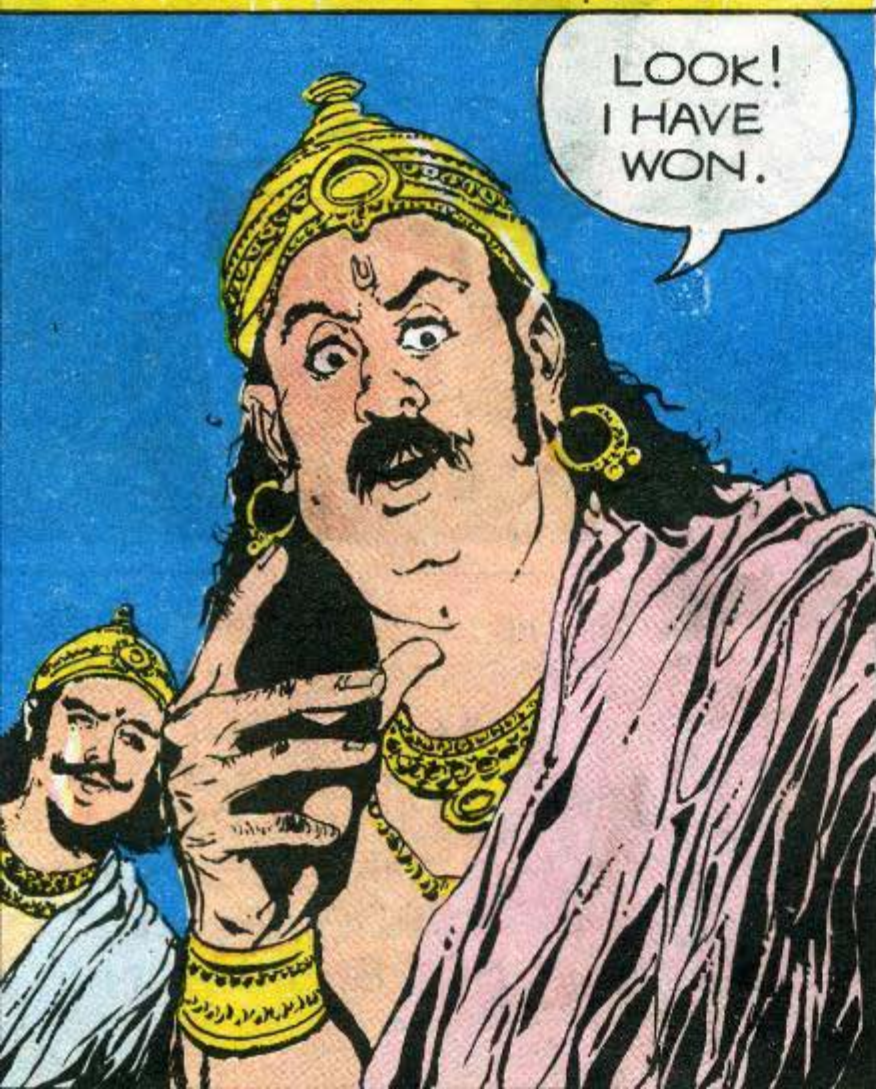
THEN BRING BACK THE
PANDAVAS. LET THERE
BE ANOTHER GAME.

YUDHISHTHIRA WAS AWARE OF SHAKUNI'S DECEPTION, STILL HE CAME BACK TO THE DICE.

THE LOSERS MUST GO INTO EXILE TO THE FOREST FOR TWELVE YEARS, AND PASS THE THIRTEENTH YEAR IN SOME INHABITED PLACE - UNRECOGNISED. IF RECOGNISED THEY MUST RETURN TO AN EXILE OF ANOTHER TWELVE YEARS. ON THE EXPIRY OF THE THIRTEENTH YEAR THE LOSER WILL GET BACK HIS KINGDOM.



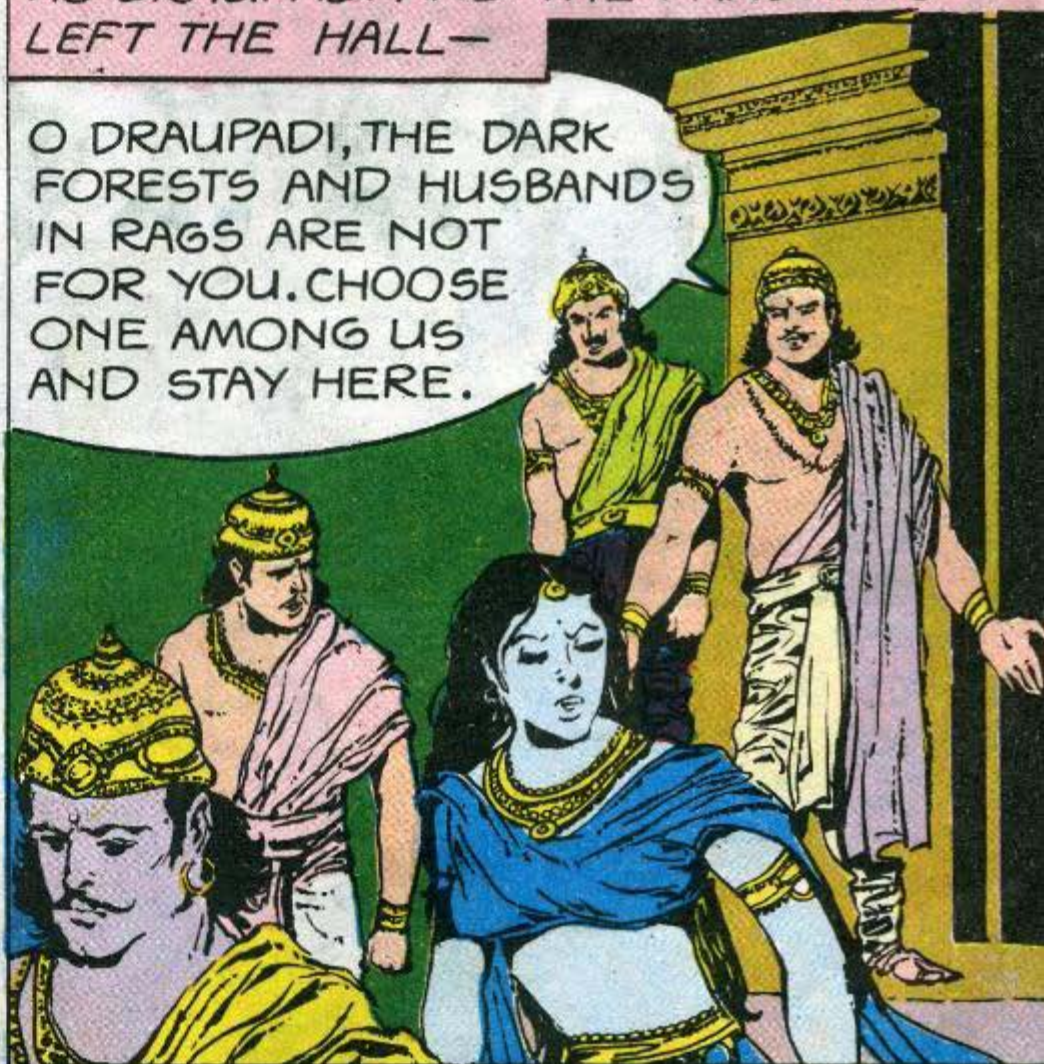
YUDHISHTHIRA AGREED AND SHAKUNI CAST THE DICE.



LOOK!
I HAVE
WON.

AS DRAUPADI AND THE PANDAVAS LEFT THE HALL—

O DRAUPADI, THE DARK FORESTS AND HUSBANDS IN RAGS ARE NOT FOR YOU. CHOOSE ONE AMONG US AND STAY HERE.



BUT DRAUPADI UTTERED NOT A WORD.

AFTER CONSOLING THEIR WEEPING MOTHER KUNTI, DRAUPADI AND THE PANDAVAS SET OUT FOR THE FOREST.



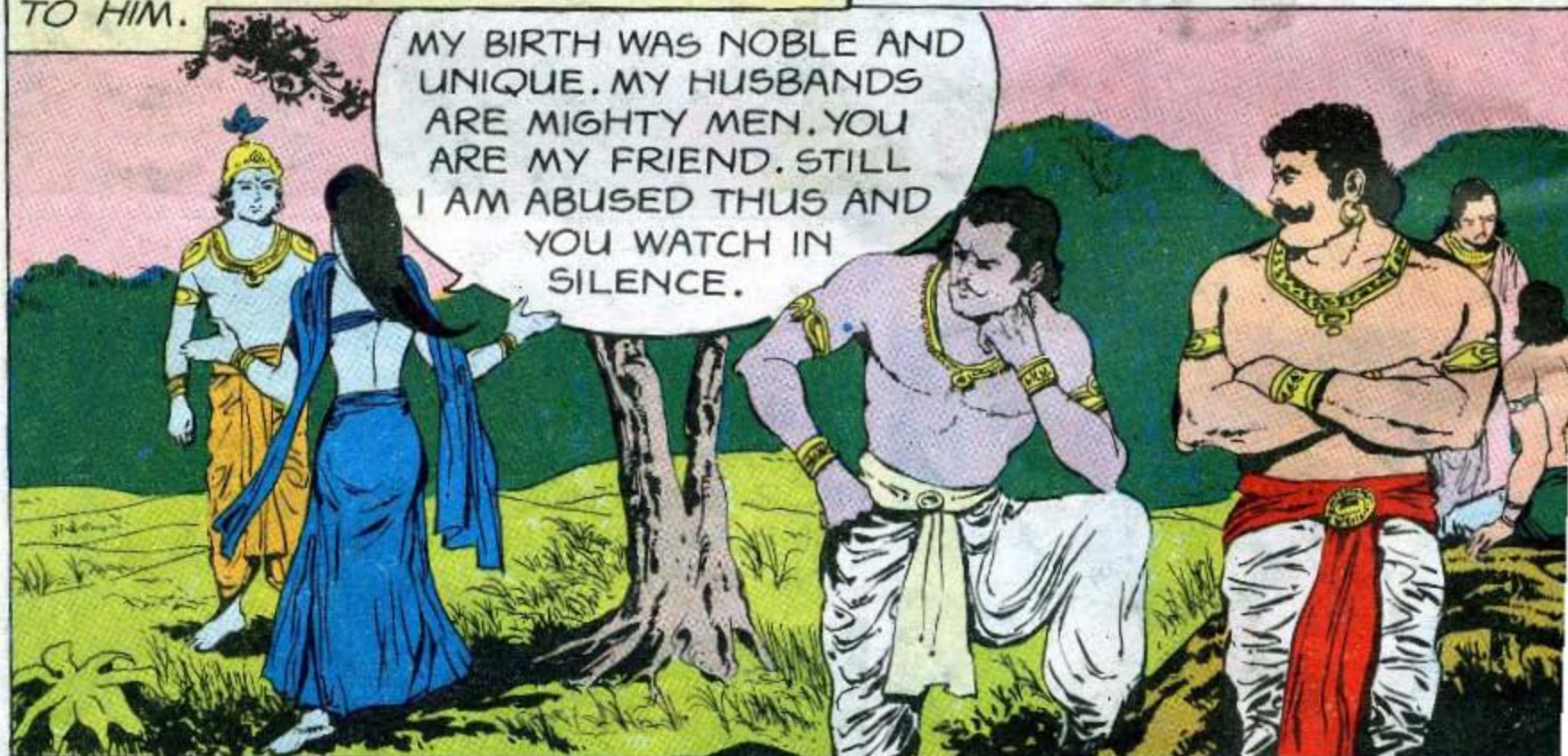
I VOW THAT THIRTEEN YEARS HENCE THE WIVES OF THOSE VILLAINS WILL LANGUISH IN DESOLATE WIDOWHOOD.

LORD SURYA BROUGHT A GIFT FOR THE VIRTUOUS PANDAVAS AS THEY ENTERED THE FOREST.



FOOD COOKED IN THIS VESSEL WILL BE INEXHAUSTIBLE AT EACH MEAL TILL DRAUPADI EATS.

KRISHNA DIVINING THE SAD PLIGHT OF THE PANDAVAS, CAME TO THEM. WHEN DRAUPADI SAW THE COMPASSIONATE ONE, SHE POURED OUT HER HEART TO HIM.

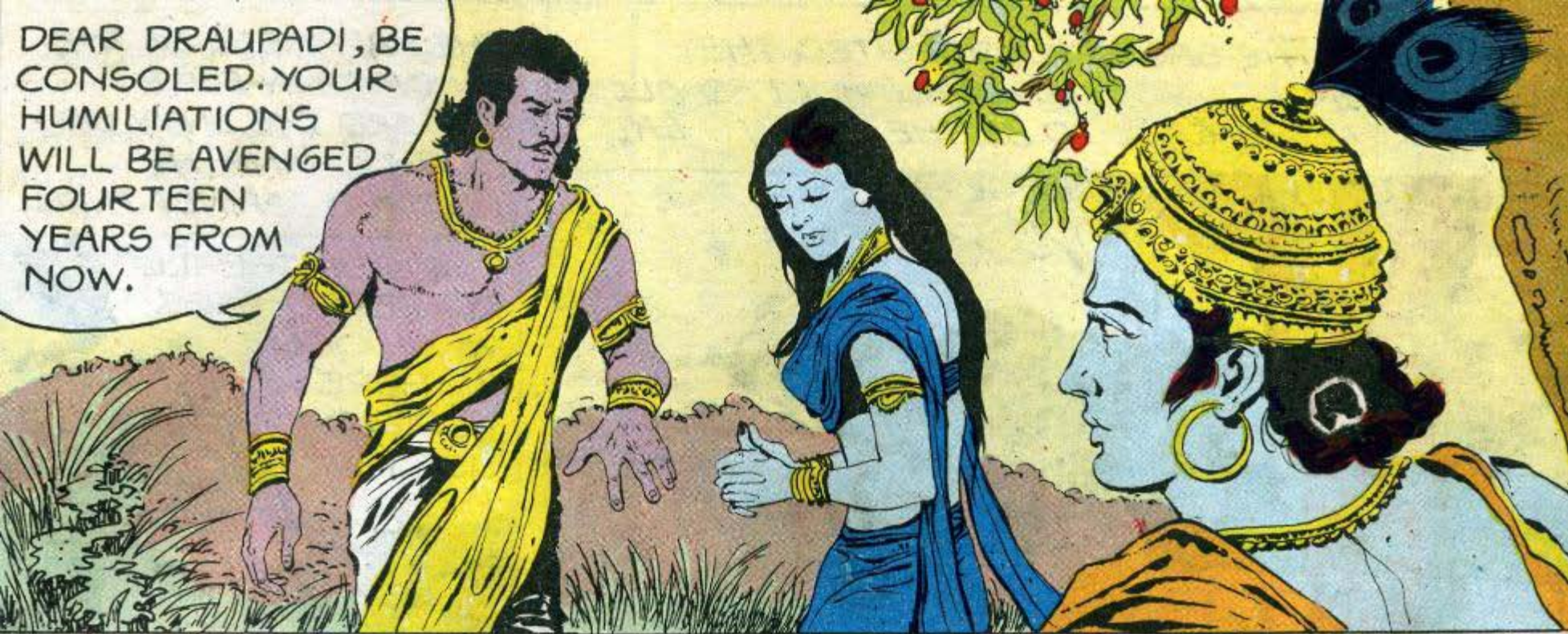


MY BIRTH WAS NOBLE AND UNIQUE. MY HUSBANDS ARE MIGHTY MEN. YOU ARE MY FRIEND. STILL I AM ABUSED THUS AND YOU WATCH IN SILENCE.

MOVED BY HER DISTRESS, KRISHNA TOOK AN OATH.

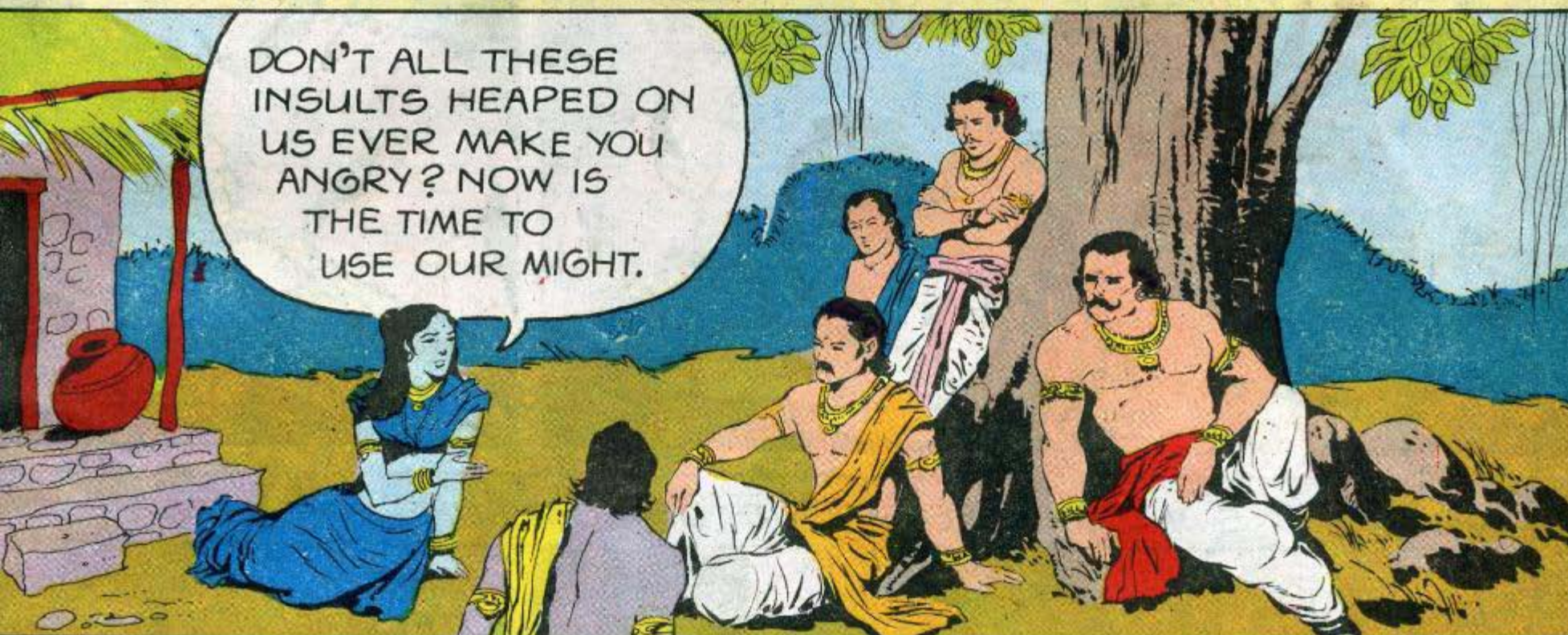


THE WIVES OF THOSE WHO HAVE INJURED YOU WILL SUFFER THIS AGONY. YOU SHALL YET REIGN AS THE QUEEN. MY WORDS SHALL NOT BE IN VAIN.



DEAR DRAUPADI, BE CONSOLED. YOUR HUMILIATIONS WILL BE AVENGED FOURTEEN YEARS FROM NOW.

BUT DRAUPADI'S RAGE SMOULDERED ON. ONE DAY IN THE FOREST —



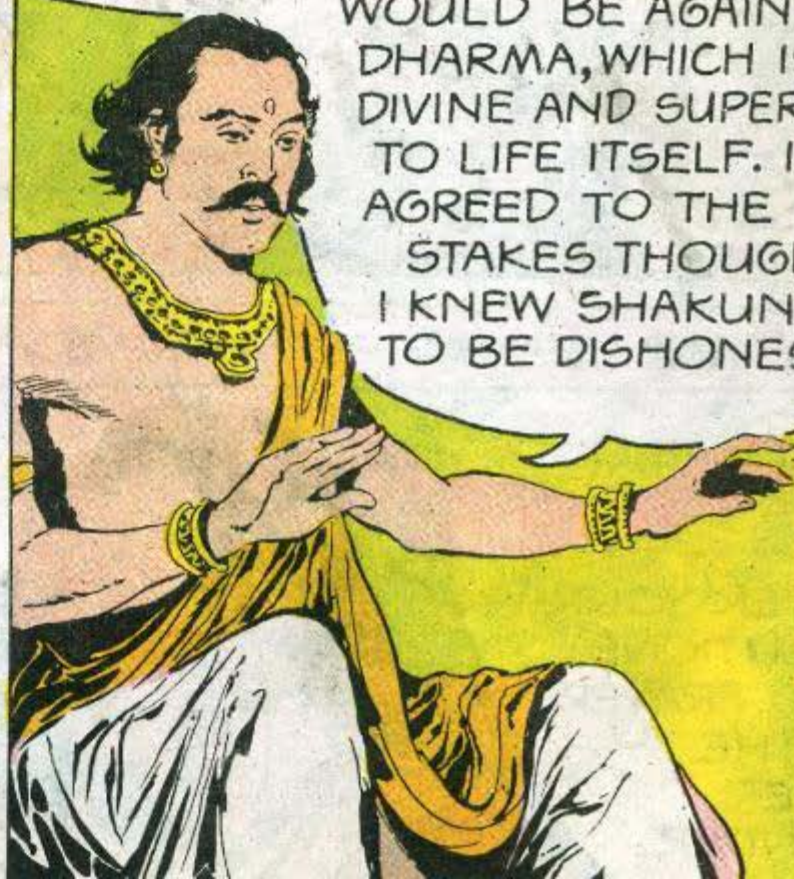
DON'T ALL THESE INSULTS HEAPED ON US EVER MAKE YOU ANGRY? NOW IS THE TIME TO USE OUR MIGHT.

AT THAT MOMENT BHEEMA SIGHED IN WRATH.

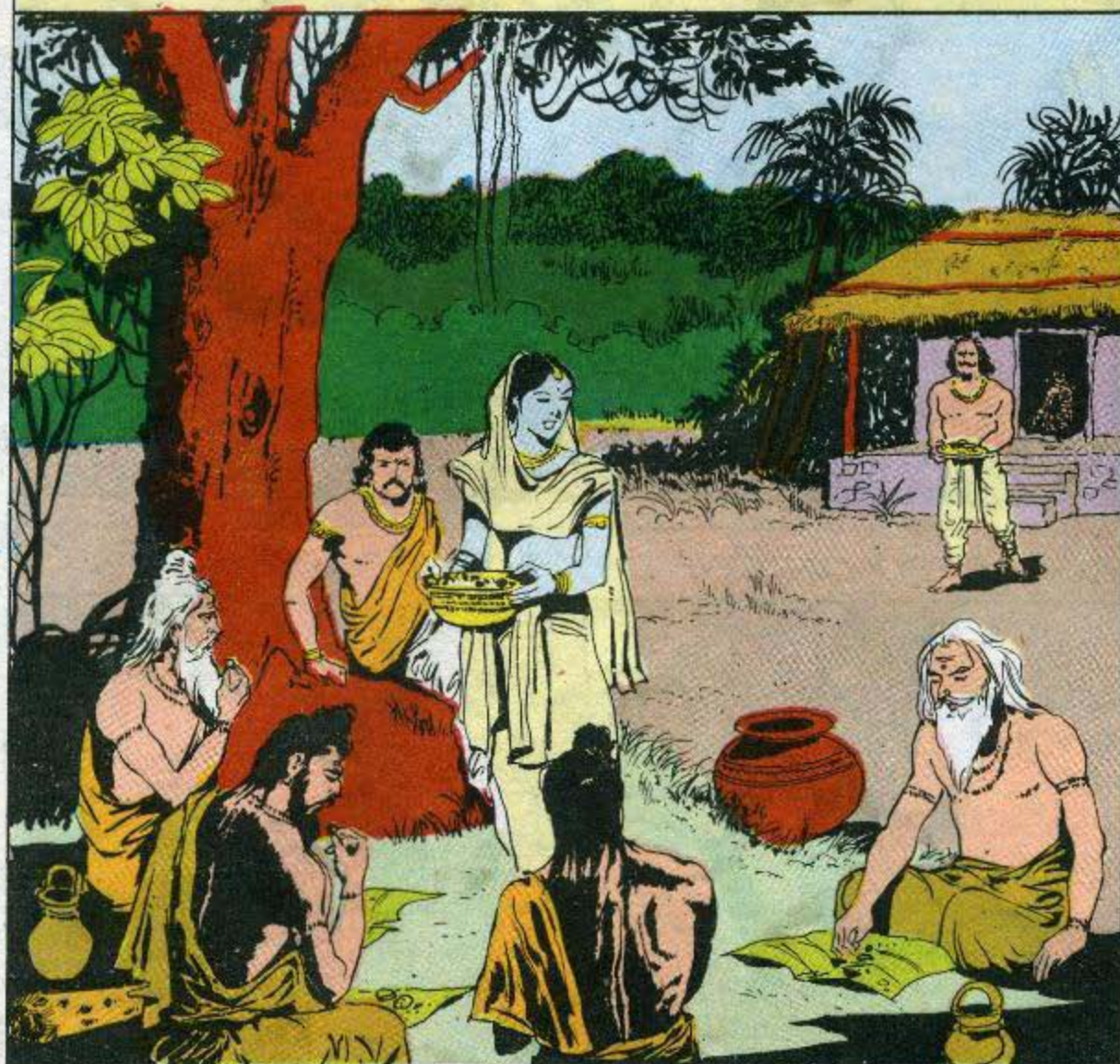
DRAUPADI IS RIGHT. THE KAURAVAS MISTAKE YOUR MORALITY FOR COWARDICE. LET US WAGE A WAR FOR OUR KINGDOM.



DO NOT BE IMPETUOUS. IT WOULD BE AGAINST DHARMA, WHICH IS DIVINE AND SUPERIOR TO LIFE ITSELF. I AGREED TO THE STAKES THOUGH I KNEW SHAKUNI TO BE DISHONEST.



MANY WERE THE SAGES WHO VISITED THE PANDAVAS IN THE FOREST. DRAUPADI FED ALL OF THEM TAKING CARE TO BE THE LAST TO EAT.



THE HAPPINESS OF THE PANDAVAS IN EXILE ROUSED THE ENVY OF DURYODHANA. HE PLOTTED AGAINST THEM.

DURVASA THE ILL TEMPERED SAGE WILL SOON BE HERE. I COULD USE HIM.



DURVASA CAME AND WAS PLEASED WITH DURYODHANA'S LAVISH HOSPITALITY.

O KING, WHAT CAN I DO FOR YOU IN RETURN?



PLEASE GO WITH YOUR 10,000 DISCIPLES AND SEEK THE HOSPITALITY OF YUDHISHTHIRA, WHEN DRAUPADI HAS FINISHED EATING HER MEAL.

DURVASA AGREED AND ARRIVED AT THE FOREST.

WELCOME, O REVERED SAGE. COME BACK AFTER YOUR ABLUTIONS AND PRAYER AT THE RIVER YONDER.

WE WILL COME. LET DRAUPADI HAVE A GOOD MEAL READY FOR US.



DRAUPADI WAS AGHAST.

KRISHNA, YOU
MUST SAVE
ME FROM
DURVASA'S
WRATH.



KRISHNA, THE ALL-KNOWING, APPEARED.

DRAUPADI, I AM
HUNGRY. LET ME
EAT FIRST. THEN
I WILL SEE WHAT
I CAN DO.



DRAUPADI WAS MISERABLE.

I HAVE JUST
TOLD YOU -
THERE IS
NO FOOD!



THIS IS NO TIME
FOR JOKES; I AM
TIRED AND
HUNGRY. GO. FETCH
THE VESSEL
AND SHOW
IT TO ME.



**WHEN DRAUPADI
BROUGHT THE
VESSEL -**

WHAT IS THIS?
A PARTICLE OF
RICE AND
VEGETABLE
STUCK
HERE?



MAY THE
SOUL OF THE
UNIVERSE BE
SATIATED WITH IT.



MEANWHILE AT THE RIVER-

NOT A SINGLE MORSEL FOR ME. NO!

I FEEL AS IF I'VE EATEN FOR SIX.

HOW CAN WE FACE DRAUPADI? LET US SLINK AWAY.

THUS DRAUPADI WITH KRISHNA'S HELP THWARTED DURYODHANA'S ATTEMPT TO HARASS THEM.

THE YEARS PASSED. AT LAST THE THIRTEENTH AND THE MOST DIFFICULT YEAR CAME ROUND.

WE SHALL SPEND THIS YEAR IN THE SERVICE OF KING VIRATA. I WILL GO AS KANKA, AN EXPERT IN DICE.

I WILL GO AS A COOK-BALLAVA.

WE WILL TEND HIS HORSES AND GRAZE HIS COWS.

I WILL GO AS A DANCE TEACHER

I WILL GO AS SAIRANDHRI AND SEEK SERVICE AS QUEEN SUDHESHA'S MAID.

SO IN THEIR RESPECTIVE GUISES DRAUPADI AND THE PANDAVAS SOUGHT AND SECURED SERVICE IN THE PALACE OF VIRATA.

TEN MONTHS HAD PASSED WHEN KEECHAKA, THE QUEEN'S BROTHER, WAS SMITTEN BY THE BEAUTY OF DRAUPADI.

WHO OWNS YOU?

I AM THE WIFE OF FIVE MIGHTY GANDHARVAS.



BUT THIS DID NOT DAMPEN KEECHAKA'S ARDOUR.

I AM A SLAVE TO YOUR BEAUTY. BE MY WIFE.



BEWARE! O SON OF A SUTA. I AM DEAR TO MY HUSBANDS. IF ENRAGED THEY WILL KILL YOU.

THE REJECTED KEECHAKA APPEALED TO HIS SISTER.

IT IS EITHER SAIRANDHRI OR DEATH, FOR ME. HATCH A PLOT, SUDHESHNA, TO SEND HER TO ME.



I SHALL TRY.

KEECHAKA LEFT AND SUDESHNA SENT FOR DRAUPADI.

GO TO KEECHAKA AND BRING ME SOME WINE. I AM THIRSTY.



DRAUPADI WAS ALARMED.

O QUEEN, HE IS
SURE TO MOLEST
ME.

SENT BY ME
HE WON'T
DARE TO GO
WITHOUT
FEAR.

A TREMBLING DRAUPADI STOOD BEFORE KEECHAKA.

THE QUEEN HAS
SENT ME TO YOU
FOR SOME
WINE.

O GENTLE
ONE, LET
OTHERS TAKE
IT TO HER. YOU
COME AND SIT
NEAR ME...

DRAUPADI TURNED AND FLED.

OF WHAT
USE IS THE
PROWESS OF
MY HUSBANDS
WHEN THEY
CANNOT PROTECT
ME FROM SUCH
INSULTS.

KEECHAKA CAUGHT UP WITH HER AND KICKED HER IN THE PRESENCE OF ALL. YUDHISHTHIRA AS KANKA WAS HELPLESS.

GO TO THE QUEEN, SAIRANDHRI. THE GANDHARVAS WILL LOOK AFTER YOU.

THIS SUFFERING SHOULD BE THEIRS. THE ELDEST OF THEM GAMBLING AWAY WHILE I PRACTISE PIETY!



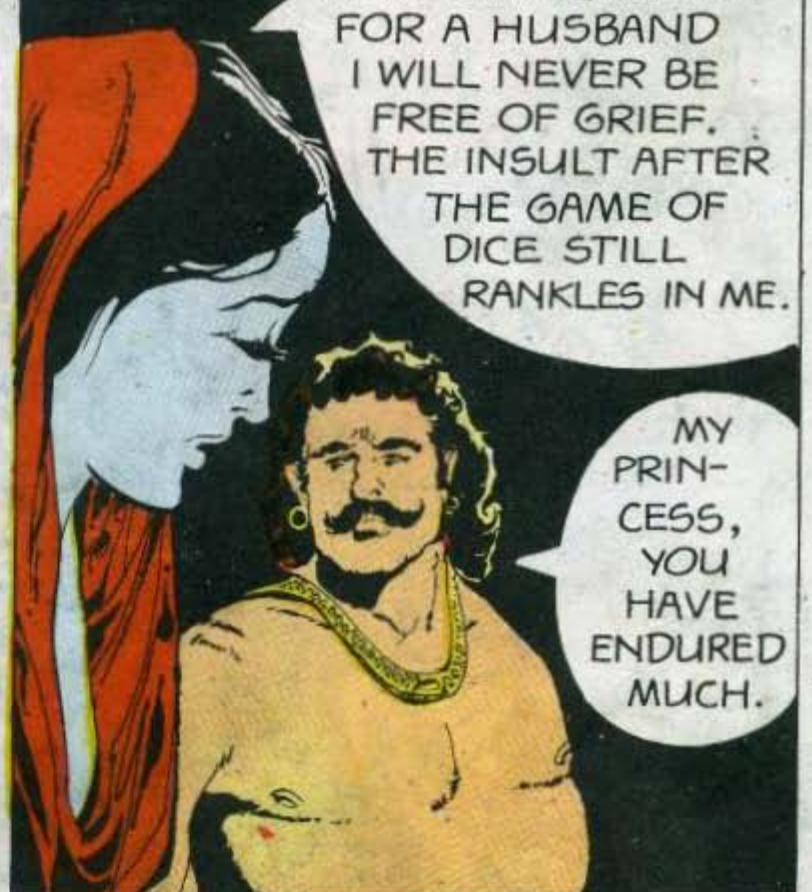
THAT NIGHT DRAUPADI WENT TO BHEEMA.



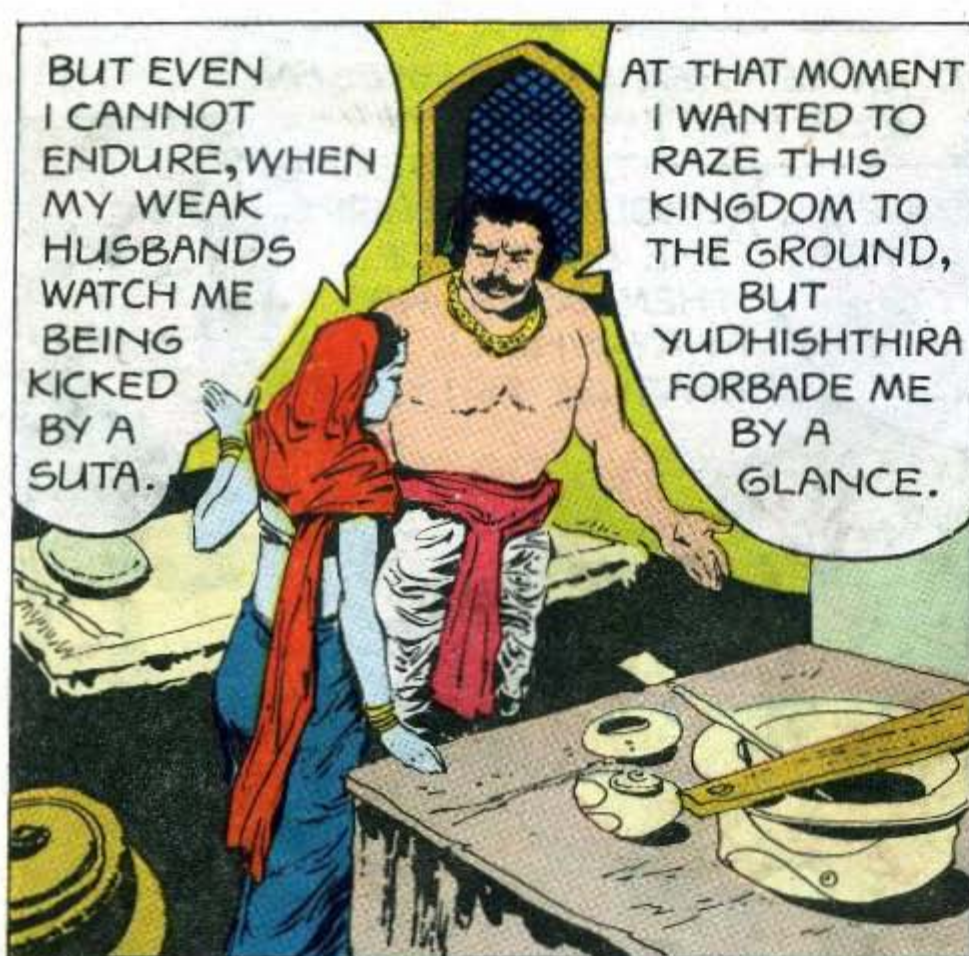
BHEEMA!
YOU SLEEP LIKE A DEAD ONE EVEN WHEN YOUR WIFE HAS BEEN INSULTED BY A CAD.

HUSH!
PATIENCE, DEAR ONE. WE WILL SOON FREE YOU FROM GRIEF.

WITH YUDHISHTHIRA FOR A HUSBAND I WILL NEVER BE FREE OF GRIEF. THE INSULT AFTER THE GAME OF DICE STILL RANKLES IN ME.

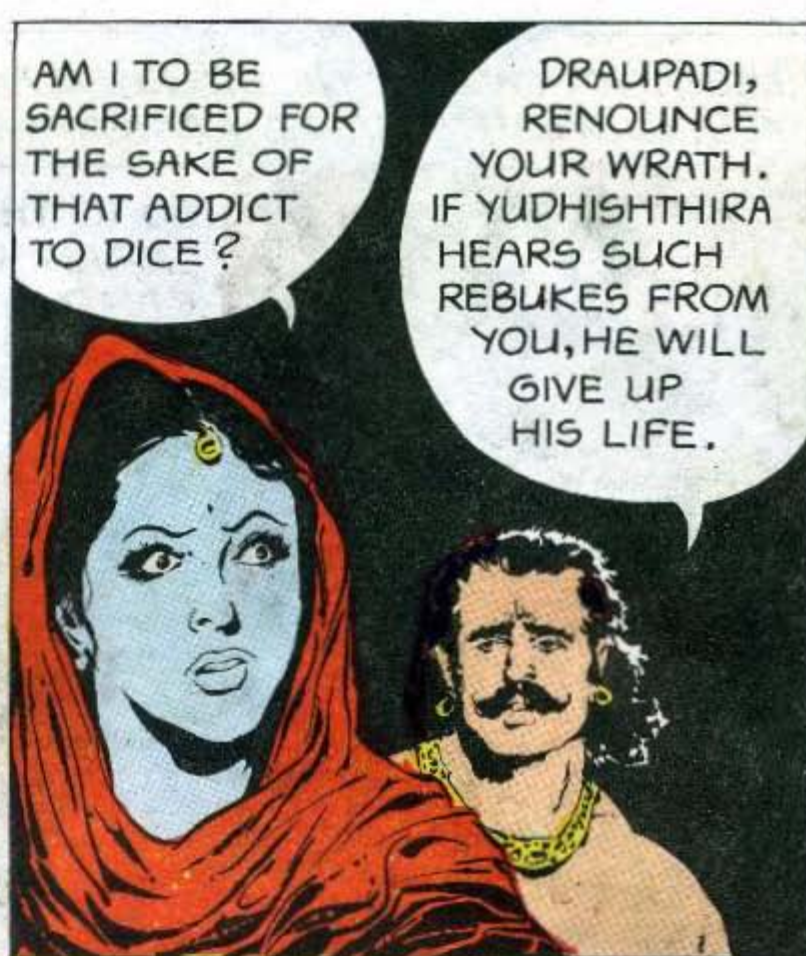


MY PRINCESS, YOU HAVE ENDURED MUCH.



BUT EVEN I CANNOT ENDURE, WHEN MY WEAK HUSBANDS WATCH ME BEING KICKED BY A SUTA.

AT THAT MOMENT I WANTED TO RAZE THIS KINGDOM TO THE GROUND, BUT YUDHISHTHIRA FORBADE ME BY A GLANCE.



AM I TO BE SACRIFICED FOR THE SAKE OF THAT ADDICT TO DICE?

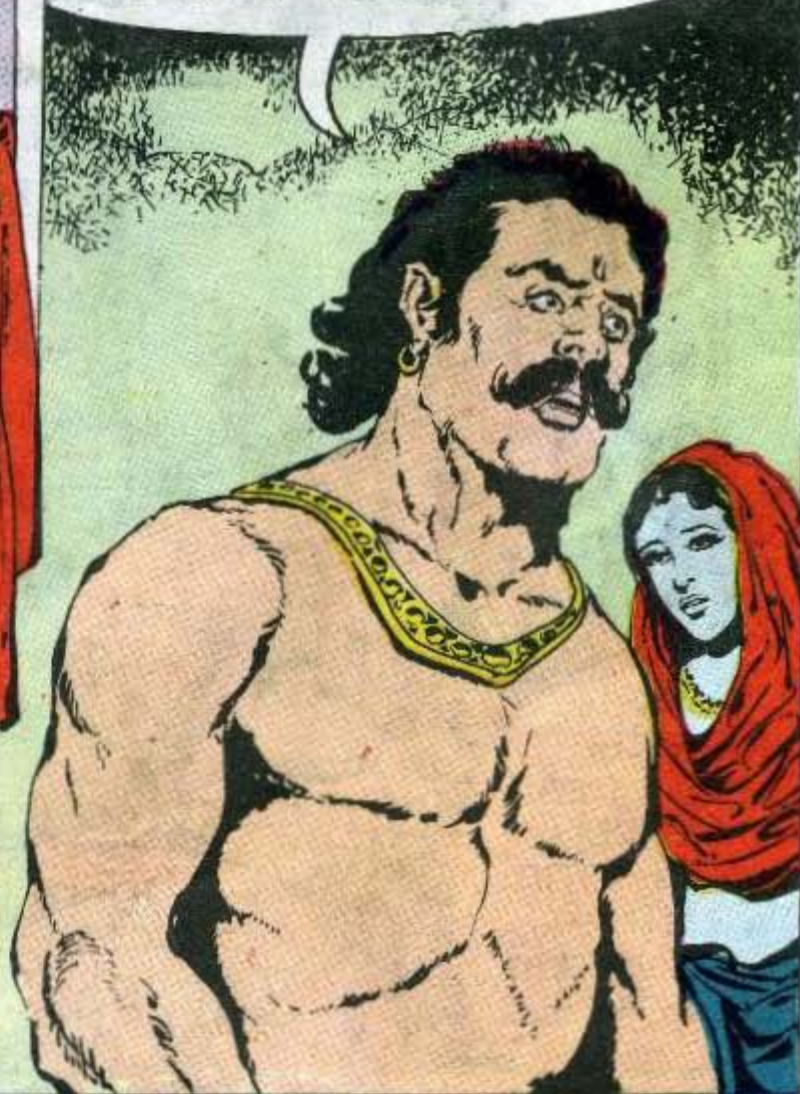
DRAUPADI, RENOUNCE YOUR WRATH. IF YUDHISHTHIRA HEARS SUCH REBUKES FROM YOU, HE WILL GIVE UP HIS LIFE.



O BHEEMA! KEECHAKA IS BENT ON VIOLATING ME. I ENTREAT YOU - KILL THE WRETCH AND PROVE MY THREATS TO HIM.

IT WAS ALMOST DAWN WHEN AN ENRAGED BHEEMA WIPED HER TEARS.

I WILL KILL KEECHAKA THIS VERY NIGHT. AGREE TO MEET HIM TONIGHT IN THE DARK, EMPTY, DANCE-HALL. LEAVE THE REST TO ME.



DRAUPADI DID AS SHE WAS TOLD. BHEEMA LAY IN WAIT. THE MOMENT KEECHAKA ENTERED-



THE FOURTEENTH YEAR CAME ROUND. BUT DURYODHANA REFUSED TO SURRENDER EVEN FIVE VILLAGES, LEAVE ALONE THE KINGDOM. WHILE THE PANDAVAS WERE PLANNING THEIR NEXT MOVE DRAUPADI TURNED TO KRISHNA.



SHAME ON THE SKILLED ARCHER ARJUNA AND SHAME ON THE MIGHTY BHEEMA THAT DURYODHANA IS STILL ALIVE.

THEN OVERCOME BY EMOTION SHE WEPT ALOUD.

O KRISHNA! THESE TRESSES WERE SEIZED BY DUHSHASANA. I WILL KNOW NO PEACE TILL HIS HANDS ARE RIPPED OFF.



THIRTEEN YEARS HAVE I WAITED KEEPING THE EMBERS OF REVENGE GLOWING IN MY HEART!



KRISHNA WAS QUICK TO ASSURE HER.

O DRAUPADI, YOU WILL SEE YOUR ENEMIES KILLED AND YOUR HUSBANDS REINSTATED.

WAR WAS DECLARED BETWEEN THE PANDAVAS AND THE KAURAVAS - A WAR THAT LASTED EIGHTEEN LONG DAYS. ON THE BATTLEFIELD, BHEEMA ATTACKED DUHSHASANA AND BROKE HIS LIMBS.

THIS FOR DRAGGING DRAUPADI BY THE HAIR AND ATTEMPTING TO DISROBE HER.

THEN BHEEMA FULFILLED THE TERRIBLE OATH HE HAD TAKEN THIRTEEN YEARS AGO.

I WILL SOON REDEEM MY OTHER PLEDGE BY BREAKING THE THIGH OF DURYODHANA.

THE BATTLE RAGED ON. WITH THE SKILFUL MANOEUVRING OF KRISHNA, THE VICTORY OF THE PANDAVAS BECAME A CERTAINTY.

AT LAST BHEEMA HAD THE OPPORTUNITY TO TAKE UP HIS MACE AGAINST DURYODHANA.



BHEEMA AND DURYODHANA BOTH MIGHTY WARRIORS, FOUGHT LONG AND HARD.



AS INTENDED BHEEMA HEARD THIS. THE MEMORY OF THE GREAT OUTRAGE CAME VIVIDLY TO HIS MIND.



HE LOOKED UP AND SAW KRISHNA SLAP HIS THIGH.



BHEEMA TOOK
THE CUE.

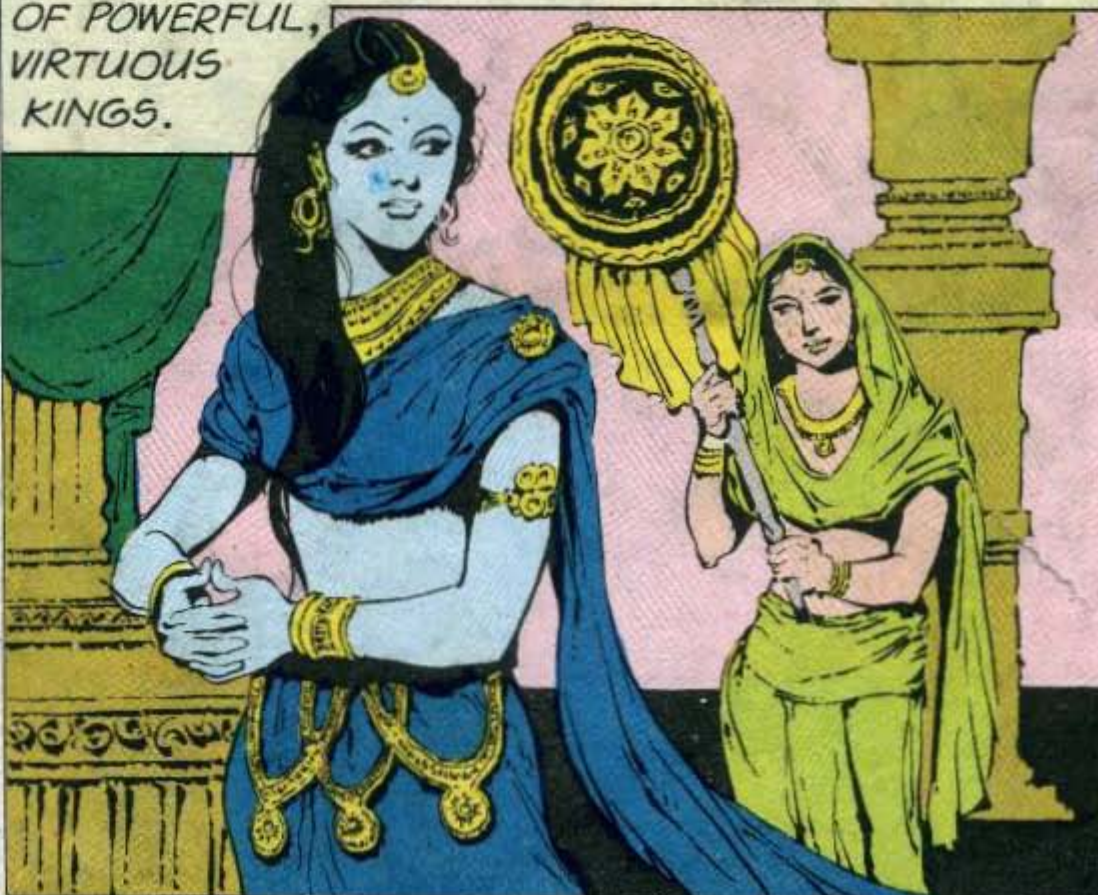
TODAY WILL
I BREAK THAT
THIGH. TODAY
WILL I
FULFIL
MY VOW.



THEN THE VICTORIOUS PANDAVAS
BLEW THEIR CONCHES. BHEEMA'S
OATHS HAD BEEN CARRIED OUT.
KRISHNA'S PROMISE TO
DRAUPADI WAS FULFILLED.



YUDHISHTHIRA BECAME THE EMPEROR AND
DRAUPADI ONCE MORE THE CHERISHED QUEEN
OF POWERFUL,
VIRTUOUS
KINGS.





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